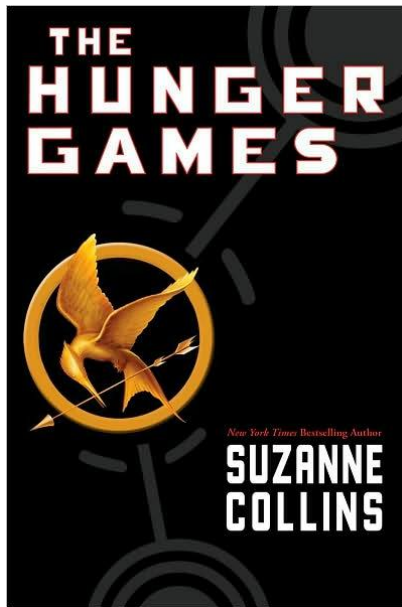


In Paperback

“The Hunger Games”



By Denise Willhite



The Hunger Games, a sci-fi novel, is the first book in “The Hunger Games” series by Suzanne Collins and was released in 2008. The Hunger Games is written for the young adult, which is not my age group, but I found myself unable to put it down and stayed up all night reading it. It was an easy read and fast-paced.

The Hunger Games takes place in the future, after the destruction of the U.S. by some unknown apocalyptic event, in a nation called Panem. Panem has in it the wealthy city of Capital that rules over 12 poorer districts. There was a 13th district but they were destroyed by the Capital after they rebelled, and as a punishment and reminder to the other 12 districts, one boy and one girl, between the ages of 12 and 18, are selected from each district by a annual lottery, also called the reaping, to participate in the Hunger Games.

The Hunger Games is an event in which the tributes (participants) must fight to the death in an outdoor arena created and controlled by the Capital Gamemakers until only one tribute remains. The surviving tribute can then return home to wealth and fame.

Because of the way that these children are chosen for the Hunger Games, I feel the book is great for discussion on society and government control and the value of human life.

The book begins with a girl from District 12, 16-year-old Katniss Everdeen, who volunteers to replace her sister, Primrose, for the 74th annual Hunger Games. Also selected from District 12 is Peeta Mellark, a baker’s son whom Katniss knows from school.

Once the tributes have been selected, they are whisked away to the Capital where they are mentored and prepped for the Hunger Games. The mentors are previous victors of the Hunger Games. They are then publicly displayed to the Capital audience in a televised session with interviewer Caesar Flickerman in a ploy to gain audience support for the Games, which can be crucial for survival, as audience members are encouraged to send gifts like food, medicine and tools to favored tributes during the games. During this time, Peeta reveals his long-time love for Katniss.

Katniss must not only survive the games, but deal with a romance between her and Peeta and the decision to kill the tributes from the other eleven districts for her survival.

While reading this book, I was drawn to Katniss’ fierce loyalty to her family and friends, her strength, character and individuality but I think that anyone who reads this book can find a main character to relate to.

In my opinion, The Hunger Games is an excellent read that I would highly recommend. It holds your attention from beginning to end. Despite a high level of violence, usually found in books meant for a more mature audience, it is geared for those ages 14 and older.